

VZCZCXRO3654

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN  
RUEHLZ RUEHNEH RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHSK RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHAA #0654 1470902

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 270902Z MAY 09 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2860

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 5220

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2960

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2825

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3464

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000654

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN; INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV SNAR KCRM SOCI TX

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: STREET PRICE OF HEROIN REPORTED

REF: Ashgabat 184

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public internet.

¶2. (U) On May 22, the Ashgabat weekly "Adalat" (Justice) published an article by Ulugbek Amankulov, Judge of Hojambaz Etrap (district) Court of Lebap province, reporting that a resident of Olam village named Azat Abdyrahmanov purchased two grams of heroin for 240 manats (approximately \$84) from a person named Batyr. The suspect was arrested by police in Hojambaz city before he could return to his village. He was later sentenced to ten years in prison under Article 292 of the Criminal Code.

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: "Adalat" serves as the only real available source of information regarding drug-related crimes or the street price for illegal drugs in Turkmenistan. A local police captain, an acquaintance of an Embassy local staff member, confirmed that the current price for heroin in rural areas outside of Ashgabat is \$42 per gram. The price of heroin in Ashgabat is reportedly higher, and runs between \$50 and \$100 per gram, depending on the quality. Our contact added that the street price of heroin in the country nearly doubled after the currency exchange rate unification one year ago that caused a drop in the value of the dollar vis-`-vis the manat. Intensive arrests of drug dealers by the State Counter-Narcotics Service during the past year also encouraged the dealers who remained to increase the prices. END COMMENT.

MILES